

Pray for the *Koli* of India

The Koli of India are a very large, lower-caste people group found primarily in the central division of South Asia. The larger people group is subdivided into nine distinct sub-groups. Their traditional occupation is weaving, but agriculture is becoming more prevalent among them. Few Kolis own land, but higher-caste landowners often hire them to work in the fields. Relatively few Kolis are literate.



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South Asia
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My name is Nima. I am a wife and the mother of three children. I have two small sons and one newborn daughter.

My family lives in a small clan village in the hills of Maharashtra, a state in central India. All of my husband's relatives also live in this village. His family has lived in this village for many generations. I come from a village a day's walk from here but moved to this village with my husband when we were married.

Our family is very poor. My husband works every day in the sugarcane fields. When I am not busy with the children and with cooking and housekeeping, I join him in the fields. My mother-in-law lives with us in our home and helps take care of the children when I work in the fields.

I hope that some day my children will be able to attend school. Neither my husband nor I was ever able to attend school because the school is so far away from our village. My dream is that my children will have the opportunity to get an education that will enable them to get better jobs one day.

(Nima is a fictional character whose story is based on research and anthropological profiles of the Koli.)



Fast Facts

Religion: Hinduism
Languages: Gujarati, Marathi, Hindi
Population: 10.4 million
Division: Central

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